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Two Hundredth Anniversary

of

The Church of Christ,

Congregational,

Newington, Connecticut

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SEPTEMBER 30 AND OCTOBER 1, 1922.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT

From the
Newington Congregational
Church, by E. Stanley Wells

TWO

HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

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Printed by Vote of the Standing Committee of the Church.

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THE words printed in this book tell us what was spoken at the 200th anniversary of this Church, but they can not picture for us the many people who were present nor the fine spirit of the occasion.

September 30th and October 1st were ideal days, and many of the Church's friends and members of former years came and mingled with those of the present time. The ladies of the Church served dinner to a happy family of about two hundred persons.

The loan of antiques added a touch of reality to the historic days mentioned in the addresses. The friendly groups, gathered to renew old acquaintances, added the touch of reality to the bonds of Christian love, and the music, given by those who had charge of that part of the program, surrounded all with the enchantment of melody.

May the years to come make the numbers greater and the bonds stronger. May we all strive in His name to pass on to the next generation the rich inheritance we have received from the past made richer still by our own Christian experience. May our Church, though old in years, be ever young in spirit and be ever ready to leap to the challenge which every passing year shall bring for Christian service. Let this be our prayer.

HARRY SEAVEY MARTIN,
Minister of the Church, 1922.

On
Publication
MAR 19 1923

NEWINGTON, CONN.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1922

2:00 P. M. HISTORICAL SERVICE

Prelude
Invocation
Hymn, 553—I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord
History of the Church from its organization in 1722 to the close of the ministry of Rev. Joab Brace in 1855
E. Stanley Welles
Hymn, 573—Children of the Heav'nly King
History of the Church from the installation of Rev. William P. Aikin in 1856 to the present time
William A. Willard
Hymn, 382—What a Friend We Have in Jesus
Solo
Sketch of Some of the Early Families of the Parish
Mrs. Arlan P. Francis
Hymn, 562—Blest Be the Tie That Binds

6:00 P. M. DINNER

7:30 P. M. PRAISE SERVICE

Anthem—Jehovah's Praise
Anthem—Dreams of Galilee
Anthem—Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem
Hymn, 698—I Love to Tell the Story
Illustrated Address — Contemporaneous Neighboring Churches
Rev. Sherrod Soule, D.D.
Hymn, 146—God Be With You Till We Meet Again

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1922

10:30 A. M. CHURCH SERVICE

Anthem—Jerusalem My Glorious Home
Solo—Open the Gates of the Temple
Sermon—The Church of Eternity in Newington
Rev. H. S. Martin

12:00 M. SUNDAY SCHOOL

History of the Sunday School, 1818—1922
Joshua Belden

7:30 P. M. CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

Reminiscences of the Society
Some of the Older Members

There was a Loan Exhibit of heirlooms representing the first 100 years of this period in the parish house on Saturday, September 30th, at 1:00 P. M.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

BY EDWIN STANLEY WELLES

THE privileges of a saw-mill for making pipe staves to be exported to the West Indies were what really began the settlement of Newington.

At a town meeting of Wethersfield held Oct. 25th, 1677, liberty was granted to Emmanuel Buck, John Riley, Samuel Boardman and Joseph Riley to build a saw-mill "with sufficient ponding and also twenty acres of land to each of them for ever and to be about Pipe stave Swamp"—the region adjacent to our Center mill pond—"and the mill to be up and fit to work at or before the last of September next insuing the date hereof."*

While there is nothing to prove that this saw-mill, the second in the then spacious territory of ancient Wethersfield, but the first on this west side of the Connecticut River, was erected by September 30th, 1678, it is reasonable to suppose that by 1680, at the latest, the mill and some sort of a house adjoining it, were built in Newington, thus forming the tiny nucleus of the present town.

A document recently unearthed indicates that the name of the first settler was John Slead, who was living "at the saw-mill house" in June of 1682. It is regrettable to state that he was a troublesome individual who was ejected by Farmington from its town bounds at the hands of Capt. Richard Seymour. Fortunately, he remained in Newington something less than 20 years ** and passed on to Portland, this state, where he died in 1719.

A tradition, probably correct, gives as the other first settlers, Joseph Andrus, earlier a soldier in King Phillip's war, who came over from Farmington, his two nephews, Daniel and John, who followed him later, and Samuel Hunn of Wethersfield.

Newington is rightly called a daughter of Wethersfield, but it is surprising to find that only one of the five pioneers came from that town.

Samuel Hunn was the founder of the settlement at the North End and lived on the place now owned by Mr. Albert D. Whaples. Do the words on his grave-stone suggest an active, restless character?

*—Wethersfield Town Votes, 1, p. 77.

**—Middletown Land Records, 2, p. 50.

"The flesh & bones of Samuel Hunn
Ly underneath this Toomb
oh lett them rest in Quietness
Until the day of Doome"

Joseph Andrus settled on the site south of the Center post office where Mr. Ernest Shelton lives, and the old Andrus house was still standing 25 years ago.*

His nephew, Daniel, lived at the extreme south end of what is now Newington, on the farm belonging to Mr. Gustave Gronlund and known as the Philo Webster homestead. Daniel's brother, John, also located in that section of the parish.

The noticeable feature in this settlement is the distance each settler was from the other, a distance from lack of roads, of serious import.

It makes it clear, however, that these founders had little, if any fear of the neighboring Indians, whose "wigwams around the mill pond," were, as an old chronicler informs us, "near as thick as the houses in a city." Otherwise, a compact settlement would have been imperative.

For 30 years after the building of the saw-mill near our Center Mill Pond, we are left to conjecture what was happening in the little hamlet west of Cedar Mountain.

It is evident that there was no large migration into our valley, but a steady, gradual growth of inhabitants.

We know they were obliged to make the toilsome passage over the wooded mountain and across the swamp beyond, to attend divine worship in the Wethersfield meeting house, a task that challenged the strongest men on some of those winter Sundays, with drifting snows and a temperature below zero.

How women and children got over there, as they must have, is an enigma.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that in 1708, they made their discontent known by petitioning for the privileges of a district parish.

After a delay of 2 years, the town of Wethersfield granted them liberty to worship God "amongst themselves," for the four harsh months of December, January, February and March.

This half-way covenant was scarcely satisfactory, and 2 years later the inhabitants in this West Division again petitioned for a separate parish.

This time their importunity prevailed and a committee appointed for the purpose, reported at a town meeting held Mar. 23, 1713, that the proposed meeting house should be located "on that piece of cleared land adjacent to the house of Joseph Hurlbut and John Griswold, westerly, about the middle of said land." At the May session of the General Court of that year, the new parish was chartered, and the choice of the site of the proposed meeting house was confirmed by a committee of the General Court in October, 1715.

*—It burnt down Dec. 5, 1897.

This site, it should be explained, was south of the residence of Mrs. Henry M. Robbins, and was subsequently relinquished in favor of the one north of the house of Joseph Andrus at the Center, where the meeting house was erected. The first recorded meeting of our Ecclesiastical Society was held on the 5th day of April, 1716, at the house of James Francis who, it is thought, lived across the street to the south of the present residence of Mrs. William T. Wells. It was then voted to raise the new meeting house "in this instant month April," and a committee, consisting of John Stoddard, Samuel Hunn and Stephen Buck, was chosen to have charge of the undertaking. Josiah Willard—let his name be remembered—was elected the first clerk of the new Society, an office he faithfully filled for 28 years.

He was its first recorded treasurer, and subsequently was a deacon until his death in 1757. The first Society's committee was chosen at the meeting held December 2, 1717, and the men comprising it were Jabez Whittlesey, Joseph Andrus and John Deming.

Of these, John Deming was the first deacon of our church, while Jabez Whittlesey was the second, and Joseph Andrus's son, Joshua, succeeded Josiah Willard as deacon at the latter's death.

Significance attaches to the date of the Society's meeting of Dec. 15th, 1718, as the name NEWINGTON first appears, without explanation, in the records of that meeting. Why was it so called? Dr. Brace understood that it was "out of regard to the place of Dr. Watts's residence near London, and as a testimony of the love for the character and writings of that eminent minister and poet, which has ever been felt by the people of this place."

His is the only authority we have on the subject.

It was nearly 4 years after the first Society's meeting, that a committee was selected to invite a minister to settle over the new parish. The man invited was Mr. Nathaniel Burnham of Wethersfield, brother of the Rev. William Burnham of Kensington, and a graduate of Yale in 1709, who never became a settled minister, presumably preferring the secular life. He declined, and a few months later, in April, 1720, the Rev. Elisha Williams, also then living in Wethersfield, was called to be the pastor here.

For the first time at the meeting of the Society held September 5, 1722, is there mention of the choice of a moderator. On that occasion Jabez Whittlesey—he of unyielding character—was chosen, with the stern injunction that "if any man shall presume to speek without Liberty he shall forfit the sum of one shilling." The day of gathering informally at the Society's meeting was over.

The building of the new meeting house had been lagging: indeed in its 80 years of existence, it never was a completely finished edifice. It stood about opposite Mr. George Pittsinger's house, fronting closely the street which then ran where the trolley tracks do now.

Rude, unpainted, and hardly fit for use, the Rev. Elisha Williams had been officiating in it for 2 years, when at a meeting, September 12, 1722, it was voted, "to keep wensday the 3d of October next ensuing as a fast to implore devine assistance of God in gathering a Church of Christ hear and in the ordination of the Revd. Mr. Elisha Williams."

And on Wednesday, Oct. 3rd, 1722, kept as a solemn fast day, this church of Christ was duly organized and the Rev. Mr. Williams ordained, with the assistance of the Rev. Stephen Mix of Wethersfield and the Rev. Samuel Whitman of Farmington.

The little company that gathered weekly in that ancient meeting house was doubtless summoned by the beating of a drum, for the Society's committee was authorized to purchase one, and tho the vote does not state for what purpose, the reason for its purchase is evident.

The earliest church records are lost, but it must have been a small flock that Mr. Williams began to tend as its spiritual shepherd.

The slow progress in making the house of worship habitable, would indicate that the people were weak in both numbers and means.

They were strained to the utmost to provide a meeting house and a parsonage at the same time.

A year after the organization of the church we find mention of the institution next to it, dearest to the minds and hearts of our New England ancestors—the school.

Dec. 31, 1723, Jabez Whittlesey and Isaac Buck were appointed "a school Comtee and the Cuntry Money to them to defray part of the charg of a school." At first the school was kept in a private dwelling: indeed it was thus kept for many years at both ends of the parish, and for a number of years at the so-called "west side," toward Stanley Quarter.

6 years after the appointment of a school committee, a committee, consisting of Ebenezer Kilbourn and Nathaniel Churchill, was chosen to cover the school house which stood off the commons near the green, which was somewhat south and southwest of the present green. This was the first school house in Newington, and it was undoubtedly completed and ready for use in 1730.

Another necessary adjunct to a New England settlement was the pound, a square enclosure, familiar in my boyhood days, now unknown here.

In 1726, Ebenezer Kilbourn, who had been the local constable, a man of considerable influence, was chosen to have charge of erecting the pound, and to serve as pound keeper.

When I was a boy, Erastus Kilbourn, a descendant of Ebenezer, was pound keeper and used to step across the street from the Kilbourn homestead, to let in and let out the impounded animals. For generations, the Kilbourns seem to have acted as pound keepers,

sextons and grave diggers. The original pound, it should be said, was in the rear of the first meeting house, and only separated from it by a lane or passage way.

In our chronology we are already getting beyond the pastorate of the Rev. Elisha Williams. Some sentences should be devoted to this extraordinary man.

He was born in Hatfield, Mass.; a Harvard graduate, he married Miss Eunice Chester of Wethersfield, and was for a time tutor of the Yale refugee students staying in that town. After 6 years of service as first pastor of our church, he was honored with a call to become Rector or President of Yale College. He was a versatile man, of brilliant parts and his parishioners parted with him, with great reluctance, as well they might. After 13 years of service at Yale College, he resigned on account of ill health and returned to Wethersfield, but his years of usefulness were by no means over.

He was Representative to the General Assembly for 22 sessions, 5 of which he served as Speaker of the House; he was a Judge of the Supreme Court, a Colonel of a regiment raised to go to Canada, and Colonial Agent to Great Britain. He was not quite 61 years of age when he died July 24, 1755 in Wethersfield. He must have been, as President Stiles depicted him, "a man of splendor." He lived, while in Newington, in a large house of which I have an indistinct recollection, on the knoll across the street, south of the residence of Mr. Harry C. Goodale, where one can picture him gazing at the sweet meadow scenery spread out before him, and the glorious winter sunsets over the sparkling wastes of snow.

It was not until the year of Mr. Williams's removal to Yale College that an acre of ground, some rods northwest of the meeting house, was set apart for burial purposes.

The inscription on the grave-stone informs the reader, that Lydia, wife of Pelatiah Buck, a young woman of 27, who died July 29, 1726, was "the first that was laid in this yard." Was Mr. Williams able to officiate on that sad occasion? We do not know.

His successor, the Rev. Simon Backus, who was ordained here Dec. 28, 1726, must have been present at the second burial, that of Simon Willard who died Jan. 8, 1727, at the age of 65, and was. as his head-stone tells us, "the first Male laid in this Yard."

There is no mention in the Society records of a grave digger until 25 years after the first interment, when at the annual meeting in December, 1751, Timothy Kilbourn was appointed "a Sextone to dig graves in this Society." Did some friend or neighbor perform that necessary task before that date?

A year earlier the Society had voted to have "a Bier" provided for carrying the dead to their graves. 23 years later Josiah Willard was authorized to buy a "funeral cloth" or pall, and at the beginning of the following century, "Arthur Andrus was appointed to make Coffins for those that apply in this Society."

It was very generally the custom in early New England to pay

scant attention to the appearance of "God's acre." Briars, weeds and grasses grew riotously together. Dr. Brace states that even in his day, the burying ground "lay open to the highway and was trodden by all manner of feet," and in 1753 we discover this odd vote that Lieut. Ebenezer Kilbourn "may have the Liberty to Inclose the Burying Place If he Pleases."

Perhaps the cows of Lieut. Kilbourn who lived close by, with no fence to prohibit, caused him some inconvenience by straying into the unprotected burying ground, where there was more herbage than graves.

The duty of caring for the meeting house was a simple one then, and was quite often entrusted to some woman living near by, for there was no bell to ring and no fires to kindle or tend. This task was for years called "Sweeping out the Meeting house," and widow Elizabeth Andrus, to whose house one winter's day the Society's meeting adjourned, appears on the records as the first to perform that menial but essential work, for which she received the sum of £1-12 shillings for the year 1722.

Widow Sarah Whaples did the "sweeping out" for 5 years at least, and Sergeant Caleb Andrus for a longer period. Later Eunice Kilbourn was for a number of years the sweeper, as was also her sister Happy.

For over a hundred years after the close of Mr. Williams's ministry there was no bell to call the people to worship.

It has already been noticed that the Ecclesiastical Society was exercising jurisdiction over civil as well as church affairs, and a minute of the doings of a meeting held Dec. 15, 1729, records a vote that the Society's committee, Joseph Hurlbut, Capt. John Camp and Ensign Richard Boardman should have "as ful power as ye selectmen in ye town as to ye business of our Society."

At first it would seem as if this vote were a direct challenge to the authority of the selectmen of Wethersfield. A little study of our Colonial statutes and of the acts of the early towns, satisfies one that such was not the case. While by law the selectmen were to "order the prudential occasions of the Town," * as a matter of fact, the powers exercised by them were far more limited than those of our present selectmen, and the selectmen of Wethersfield no doubt accepted the action of our Society as the customary procedure in the management of new parishes.

It clearly shows that the parish was largely a distinct, self-governing unit, and it was the independent, self-reliant spirit bred and manifested in our towns and parishes, that later powerfully contributed to bringing on the Revolution.

The Rev. Simon Backus, of Norwich, was the second pastor of this church.. He was graduated from Yale in 1724, and was in his 27th year when he was ordained here, Dec. 19, 1726. He did not marry for nearly 3 years after his ordination, and then he went outside of his parish, and took as his bride Miss Eunice Edwards of East Windsor, a sister of the famous Jonathan Edwards, one of the most

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*—The vote entered for the choice of the society's committee sometimes used almost the same language, viz:—"to order the prudentials of our Society."

original thinkers of America, and it is of interest to know that the celebrated divine occasionally visited his sister and preached to our people. The ministry of Mr. Backus was uneventful. After serving here quietly for nearly 19 years, he was appointed by Governor Law, chaplain of the Connecticut troops in their expedition against Louisburg on Isle Cape Breton in 1745. Many of the soldiers, encamped there, fell victims to a prevailing epidemic, and doubtless enfeebled by his constant ministrations to them, Mr. Backus succumbed to the malady himself, and died Feb. 2, 1746, and was buried there.

Dr. Brace believed him to have been "a substantial, orthodox, pious minister that gave good satisfaction to the people," and with this testimony we must be content.

It has been mentioned that a school house at the Center was built about 1730. It must have been a flimsy structure, for it did not last for more than about 24 years, for at the meeting of August 17th, 1756, it was voted that the school "be kept into two parts & the one Part to be kept yearly as near the Dwelling house of Daniel Williard southwardly as may be the other near the Dwelling house of Heirs of Revd. Mr. Simon Backus."

This indicates that the school house near the green was either gone or unfit for use, and for nearly 30 years the middle portion of the parish remained without a school building.

The second school house in Newington was built at the North End in 1757, as an entry on the Society records shows. Dec. 1, 1760, the Society voted that "the school be kept the year ensueing three months in the winter season in two Places one at the school house near Daniel Williards and at the south end near the widd. Robbins," and then it passed this suggestive vote that "the school be kept three months in the summer at three places one at each end and in near the middle of the Society by a school Dame."

This is the first notice of a female teacher in Newington, and she was to teach only during the summer when the larger boys would be at work on the farm.

In his "Early New England Schools," Mr. Small states that "the instruction in these dame schools was very elementary: the rudiments of spelling, reading in the New England Primer and the Psalter, and learning the catechism comprised it all, except in a few cases; rarely was writing or arithmetic touched upon. Knitting and sewing were generally taught the girls."* It is doubtful if the male teachers taught much besides reading, writing, arithmetic and the catechism.

The third school house was built at the South End. On Jan. 14th, 1771, it was voted that "two more school houses be Built . . one near the Southerly Corner of Lieut. Martin Kellogg's home lot and the other near Francis Deming's home lot the school houses [to] be Built by subscriptions."

As the school house at the South End is mentioned in the records of a meeting, Dec. 23rd, 1773, it was probably built that year.

In a deed of Jedidiah Mills dated April 24, 1784, it speaks of a "school House now building near to Capn. Martin Kellogg's,"

*—Early New England Schools, p. 182.

proving that the second school house at the Center, and the one which I attended as a boy, was constructed in 1784. It is certainly surprising that it was not built for 13 years after it was voted.

Was the long delay due at first to the necessity of building it by subscriptions, and then to the coming on of the Revolution which turned men's minds and means in a single direction?

It would be most pleasing to commemorate by name the first woman teacher of Newington, but the records are silent as to that. From private sources we learn that Miss Esther Latimer taught the middle school in 1796 and in 1802, doubtless for the summer terms.

It is possible, however, to mention a few of the early school masters. The first one recorded was Capt. Martin Kellogg.

He was one of the notable men of this place. Taken captive by the Indians in their raid on Deerfield the last day of February, 1704, when he was a lad of 17, he suffered untold hardships at their hands during the several years of his captivity, made three desperate escapes, the last of which was successful, married Miss Dorothy Chester of Wethersfield, and came over here in 1734. He taught school in Newington in 1741, and it is agreeable to learn that the Rev. Mr. Backus preached to the young people of the parish in November of that year at Capt. Kellogg's home, the house formerly occupied by the Rev. Mr. Williams. One may readily conjecture that Capt. Kellogg requested such a service for the young people in whom he was peculiarly interested.

Some years later Capt. Kellogg instructed 12 Indian boys who came down here from Stockbridge, Mass., for that purpose.

He was a true philanthopist and Newington was much the poorer when his honored life closed on the 13th of November, 1753.

David Webster's name appears as that of a school master, "some years past" in 1758, and in December, 1762, it was voted to pay him £2-8 shillings for "keeping school." During the period of the Revolutionary war, three men, all from the North End, were teaching school here: Josiah Willard, Daniel Willard, Jr. and Joseph Camp. Among the Willard papers are some lists of children taught at the South school in December, 1766, and at the North school in the winters of 1768 and 1769.

Probably Josiah Willard was the teacher, as Daniel Willard, Jr. was scarcely old enough at that time for such employment.

As Newington was noteworthy for the large number of school teachers it produced, those mentioned include only a few of the many who served in that capacity.

When the Rev. Simon Backus bade a last farewell to his wife in the spring of 1745, and departed as chaplain on that fateful expedition to Louisburg, he had been living with his family in the parsonage on the rise of ground across the street west of the old Martin Robbins homestead, and after his death, his widow remained there for some 5 years.

His successor, the Rev. Joshua Belden lived in his own house which stood about on the site of that part of the mansion occupied

by his great grand daughter, Miss Julia Belden.

He was the first and only one of our ministers to be a native of Wethersfield, was like Mr. Backus, a graduate of Yale, and at the time of his ordination, Nov. 11, 1747, 23 years of age. It is impossible to go into the details of his long and eventful ministry of 56 years. According to his own record there were 97 church members in full communion when he began his pastorate.

Two wars, the French and Indian, and the Revolutionary war which made serious inroads in his small parish, occurred during his ministry.

He watched the decaying condition of the old meeting house which became so dilapidated as to invite depredations, so that twice the Society's committee was directed to prosecute effectually those who had damaged it.

As early as 1779, in the midst of the Revolution, the people began to realize that something would have to be done about the matter, for it was voted that year, that a meeting be warned "to consider about building a new meeting House or repairing the old one."

5 years later it was decided by "a majority of more than two thirds of the Voters to build a New Meeting House for Divine Worship."

The story of the struggles, often bitter, for 13 years, to locate the new meeting house, which must have grieved the heart of Mr. Belden, can not be told here.

At one time, the site chosen was on the Back Lane, southwest of the Mill Pond, then on Blinn Hill, to the southwest of the present parsonage, again, northeast across the street from the Rector Williams house, and yet again, "near the West end of the Burying Yard," until in the end, wisdom prevailed and the most sightly and convenient spot was selected where this building stands, the cornerstone of which bears the date, "Sep. 1797."

We must picture the men and women as sitting apart at worship for nearly 50 years, for it was not until 1770 that it was voted that "men and their wifes be seated together."

From the minutes of a meeting held 6 years earlier, we learn the order then existing, of seating the meeting house.

It is instructive as showing who in those days were given the precedence in the selection of pews.

This is the order:—

First, List, by which the tax list is meant.
Second, Age.
Third, Parentage, and
Last of all, Usefulness.

I need not comment on this, except to remark that such an arrangement to-day would be considered intolerable.

The Rev. Mr. Belden had many trials, among which was this: Early in his ministry his salary was not paid in money, a scarce commodity, but in grain and wood, namely:—

100 bushels of wheat
150 bushels of rye
150 bushels of corn
30 bushels of oats and
16 cords of green oak or walnut wood.

It is obvious that some of his parishioners might contribute inferior grain, perhaps at times necessarily, but at other times, to get the better of the minister.

At all events, Mr. Belden bore this one-sided agreement as long as he could, and it was not until 1773, that the Society learning by experience that "the grain was found not to be an Equal Standard which has occasioned frequent uneasiness & Disquietude to the Disturbance of the Peace & harmony in the Society & of wrongs being done," voted to pay him £70, "Lawfull money," with the use of the parsonage and wood as before.

Here ended, we may be sure, that particular trial.

Mr. Belden was what might be called a "bookish" man, and it is very possible that the first public library called "The Newington Library," started in 1752, 5 years after his ordination, owed its origin to him.*

Mr. Belden had the sorrow of seeing his congregation badly depleted by the calls for men and youth to serve in the Revolution, and by the long protracted dissensions arising out of the location of the second meeting house.

He survived both his wives, and when he retired in 1803, he was apparently an infirm old man, for Dr. Brace states that tho he lived 10 years longer, he never preached in his pulpit after his ordination in 1805. With no wife and children at home, he vacated his house and in 1808, went to live with the family of his son, Doctor Joshua Belden, whose death that year in the prime of life, must have been a crushing blow to him. In the home of his son's widow, the house now occupied by Mr. Le Roy Redick, east of the Center green, he lived for 5 years, dying there July 23, 1813, at the ripe old age of 89. His grave is among those of his parishioners in our church-yard at the Center.

Dr. Brace who came to know him well, sums up his character in these words, "He was sound in the faith, dignified and circumspect in his conversation, a conscientious, holy, praying man." He might have added that he was an intense patriot during the Revolution arousing his people to make any sacrifice for the cause of liberty.

It should also be said in conclusion that he was at Yale, a classmate of the saintly missionary, David Brainerd, and all his life a supporter of the liberal theology of the great evangelist, George Whitefield, whom he entertained and with whom he enjoyed sweet communion as they strolled together along the lane back of Mr. Belden's residence.

During the long ministry of Mr. Belden the territorial limits were fixed practically as they are to-day.

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*—Some of the first books of that Library bear his autograph.

Originally the parish formed a parallelogram about 7 miles long by 2 miles and 50 rods wide, and embraced the region known as Beckley Quarter in the present town of Berlin.

The residents of Beckley Quarter, comprising 8 or 10 families, were so far removed from what we now call the Center, that they desired to be united to the Great Swamp or Kensington Society. After a series of negotiations, an exchange was effected in October, 1715, whereby this parish lost that section and gained in its place the Stanley Quarter section. Some here may be surprised to learn that until 1754, when the new parish of New Britain was established, the west boundary line of Newington was at least 130 rods west of Stanley Quarter street. For 7 years after the ordination of Mr. Belden, certain families still came from that long distance to worship here.

In 1794, Enoch Kelsey, living far to the south of our meeting house but in our parish, petitioned with some others, that a tract of land on which they lived, adjoining the Society of Worthington, now a part of Berlin, be annexed to it, and their petition was granted, so another piece was subtracted from our territory.

The process of diminishing the comparatively small area of our parish, began as soon as possible, continued intermittently, and, as some of us suspect, has not yet ended.

For a while after the retirement of the Rev. Mr. Belden, and before the ordination of Mr. Brace, the Rev. Aaron Cleveland supplied the pulpit. He was the great grand-father of President Grover Cleveland, and used to come down here to officiate from Elmwood where he was living with Samuel Talcott, in a house jointly owned by him and Mr. Talcott, now occupied by the latter's grand-daughters, the Misses Talcott.

An account was sent in to the "Connecticut Courant" from Newington, of a Fourth of July celebration in 1804, when Mr. Cleveland delivered, so we are informed, "a sermon suitable to the occasion," from Mark III, 24. Colonel Levi Lusk and Capt. Absalom Welles had charge of the celebration and the Sons of Liberty marched in procession, Capt. Robert Francis and company in front, to the house of Mrs. Blinn "where a handsome dinner was provided." "After a temperate regalement," so the account reads, "a number of patriotic toasts were drunk with the discharge of musquetry."

"Their dispersion at 6 o'clock witnessed their decorum and love of good order."*

The Rev. Joab Brace, affectionately known as "Father Brace," was born in West Hartford in 1781, and was graduated from Yale College in 1804, the distinguished statesman, John C. Calhoun, being one of his class-mates.

He preached his first sermon in Ellington where he conducted the service for the Rev. Diodate Brockway, who fell 65 feet from the steeple of his church, and lived 45 years afterwards to tell the tale of his miraculous preservation.

The next Sunday, Oct. 7th, 1804, he rode down from his native

*—Connecticut Courant, Wednesday, July 18, 1804.

town, an utter stranger along a lonely road, to the house of Deacon James Welles, then living on the site of Mr. Walker's residence, who escorted him to this building where he preached from that inspiring text, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." He was consecrated here Jan. 16, 1805, and like his predecessor, spent his entire ministry of 50 years in Newington. There are a few living among us who remember Dr. Brace.**

He was a tall, spare man, of vigorous health, with dark, piercing eyes and a sonorous voice, intimately acquainted with the experiences, both of joy and sorrow, of the families in his parish, and often laying his hand in benediction on the heads of their children.

My mother often repeated his blessing on her first born child, "The Lord bless him!" and believed in the efficacy of that benediction. He loved the people of Newington almost as much as he did his own family, and he taught them, by his own example, many lessons in every-day living, as those of thrift, the consecration of a tenth of one's income to the Lord, the scrupulous observance of the ten commandments and, at all times, a spirit of sturdy self-reliance in dependence on God.

His impress on our lives still lives. His wife, Lucy Collins, of West Hartford, whom he married a year after his ordination, was quite as remarkable as he, heartily co-operating with him in every good work, and displaying unusual abilities of mind and heart. The cause of Missions both at home and abroad was fostered by them. Our Sunday School was organized during Dr. Brace's ministry, and the distilleries here ceased their operations under his pleas for temperance. For 30 years he kept a sort of select school in his own house, attended in all by about 200 students, "out of which," he wrote, "some came to be teachers, lawyers, physicians, ministers, members of Congress and officers in Missionary institutions."

For reasons already stated, the church had been sadly depleted during the latter part of Mr. Belden's ministry, and when Dr. Brace entered upon his work here there were only 51 church members, a little over one-half as many as greeted Mr. Belden at his ordination.

Dr. Brace believed with all his heart in prayerful, evangelical work among his people, and as a result of the revival services of the ardent Nettleton in 1821, more members were added to the church in that year than the entire number at the beginning of his ministry.

When Dr. Brace came here the burying ground was unfenced, the meeting house was unheated; there was no direct road to Hartford; one was obliged either to go over the mountain to Wethersfield and then up, or around by way of West Hartford.*

Letters for Newington people were left to be called for either in Wethersfield or Hartford. There were no carpets in the houses, and the music to be heard was that of the spinning wheel.

There was no bell in this edifice until 1828, and never an organ. Nearly all who did not walk, rode on horseback to meeting. Works of divinity, with a sprinkling of history and biography, and now and then a surreptitious novel, were the books read by the people. At

**—He died in Pittsfield, Mass., at the home of the Rev. Dr. John Todd, his son-in-law, Apr. 20, 1861, and lies buried in our Newington church yard.

*—This was, of course, by the way of Francis Ave. to West Hartford main street.

the most, they did not number at any period of his pastorate more than 700 and were a homogeneous, farming community. 75 years ago at this season of the year, every day for several weeks, ox teams loaded with potatoes could have been seen wending their way to Hartford from the farms of Newington, thousands of bushels of them.

Nothing has been said about the military history of Newington.

I shall be brief in alluding to it.

Our men were principally engaged in three wars:—The French and Indian War, and the War of the Revolution, during Mr. Belden's ministry, as has been said, and the War of 1812, during Dr. Brace's pastorate.

In the French and Indian War, at least 30 young men went out from Newington, some of them serving under the veteran campaigner, Capt. Ephalet Whittlesey, of this place, and others under Capt. John Paterson of Stanley Quarter.

This parish was almost drained of its men during the anxious years of the Revolution. In 1776 our parish numbered 467 persons, and not for ~~Capt. Eliphalet Whittlesey, of this place, and others under Capt. John~~ in some instances and sons, saw actual service in that war.*

Charles Churchill, a man of the greatest influence in church and town affairs, served as Captain and three of his sons as privates, the youngest being only 9 years of age at the outbreak of the war.

Martin Kellogg hurried to enlist in that first call to arms, the Lexington Alarm in 1775, became a Captain, and subsequently a Major-General of the Militia.

Roger Welles served as a Captain under LaFayette, was present at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, and died at 41 a Brigadier-General of the Militia.

Levi Lusk was a private in Col. Wolcott's regiment before Boston, a Brigadier-General in the War of 1812 and later was promoted to a Major-General of the Militia.

In the War of 1812, 40 men from Newington comprised the 5th Company of the 6th Regiment of Militia, serving under Capt. Joseph Camp, who afterwards became a Colonel.

These military leaders from Newington, it should be noted, loved this church and were foremost in its service.

And now, in closing, may I offer a brief survey of that period in this parish previous to 1855? It may, as a whole, be described as provincial.

When Dr. Brace recorded the dismission of Mary Cole, in 1827, to Hannibal, New York, near Lake Ontario, he wrote in parenthesis, "Western Country."

Those young adventurers called "Forty-Niners," one of whom set out from Newington, the late John S. Kirkham, sailed round Cape Horn to reach their destination in California, which was practically a new continent. Of creature comforts there were scarcely any.

Those miracles—the automobile, the airplane, the submarine, the telephone, the electric light and the electric car, artificial heat and wireless telegraphy—to mention a few, had not appeared.

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*—In 1779 Dea. John Camp collected 106 pounds, 10 shillings, 8 pence half penny in continental money from the people of Newington, for the relief of the people of New Haven, Fairfield and Norwalk, who suffered from Tryon's invasion.

The discovery of steam as a motive power and the invention of the cotton gin, revolutionary factors in the industrial world, were only beginning to be felt in Dr. Brace's day, and the use of petroleum was practically unknown.

Slavery still existed in the land, and while it had largely disappeared from Connecticut by the time of Dr. Brace's pastorate, we know that his predecessor in the ministry kept slaves, as did a few of his influential parishioners. Aristocracy and wealth walked hand in hand and dominated in church and state. Tolerance was a scarce virtue.

Federalism was the political faith of most of our Newington ancestors. Wethersfield was one of the strongholds of Federalism, and when the liberal forces of Connecticut secured the Constitutional Convention of 1818, Gen. Levi Lusk of this parish, one of the two delegates from the parent town, voted against the proposed constitution, which when adopted by the people, forever broke the power of Federalism, so strongly entrenched in church and state.

That explosive doctrine, known as the Darwinian theory of evolution, had not made its momentous effects felt in this quiet community. In those days the sermon was magnified as it is with some today.

Formality attended the Minister, and rigidity his theology. A belief in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures was in vogue, and the sanctions of the Old Testament were widely appealed to. The clouds of that dreadful doctrine of the predestination of some to eternal damnation, largely overhung the blue sky of God's encompassing love. Yet an earnestness, a fearlessness, a zeal for righteousness, a desire to seek and to obey God's will, humility before Him, a willing acceptance of drudgery and hard work and the acquisitive spirit, characterized those men and women.

How much we have to be thankful for, as we stand on the threshold of the third century of this church's organization!

With our lives surrounded by influences to enlarge and enrich them spiritually and mentally, with widened visions of truth, with the heritage of those blessed lives, gone on, but still inspiriting us, let us be grateful for all the past, and ready for all the future!

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

BY WILLIAM A. WILLARD OF HARTFORD

THE people of Newington have from their earliest days been a cultured, church-loving people. Early in their history they built their church on this, the best spot of land they could find, choosing a location most convenient for all. Their public schools also had and still have their earnest and careful attention. Their cemetery, where sleep their fathers, also receives their watchful oversight, and its well kept grounds and the evidence of the care the monuments and gravemarks receive, reflect credit to the people of the Town and to the State.

There, carved in granite, we read the name of Rev. Joab Brace, D.D., who for 56 years preached the Word of God in the church that still shadows the peaceful spot where he sleeps among the people he loved and cared for, and to whose interests he devoted the best of his long life.

Among the old and time-worn stones in this beautiful cemetery we can still read the names of the early settlers of the town, buried there nearly 200 years ago. One of them Dr. Brace mentioned in his 50th anniversary discourse, the name of Simon Willard, buried there Jan. 8, 1727, and recorded as "the first Male laid in this Yard."

Simon Willard was a son of Josiah Willard, an early settler of the Town of Wethersfield, of which Newington was once a part, owning over 200 acres of land there on Broad street (now known), a part of his land lying on the east side of Connecticut River, now Glastonbury.

Josiah Willard, the settler, was son of Major Simon Willard of Kent County, England, an early pioneer to America in the year 1634 who with the Rev. Peter Bulkeley (ancestor of U. S. Senator Hon. Morgan G. Bulkeley) founded the Town of Concord, Mass., purchasing the land from the Indians, and because of the peaceful settlement they named their town "Concord."

Before the people of Newington built their first church on this sacred ground they traveled on foot over the mountain to attend the church at Wethersfield and, as is recorded, the women carrying their infant children in their arms and the men carrying their loaded guns with them to protect from the Indians.

The Sabbath was sacredly kept by our forefathers here. It began at sun-down on Saturday night, when all work ceased, till sun-down on Sunday. Parents and children attended divine worship. The Bible was read in the homes and the children taught its truths and its teachings as laid down in the catechism, much of which they committed to memory and we can truly say put into practice in their daily lives and intercourse with their fellow men. There were no jails or prisons in those early days of Wethersfield and Newington, the influence of the "Mayflower compact" in which men agreed to be true to God and to their fellow men, the principles on which this land was founded still guided our early settlers here in Newington, and the influence is still held for good among its peace-loving people.

It was the custom during Dr. Brace's long administration as pastor of this church for the children to show respect and reverence for their minister. If a group of children were walking along the road and the minister approached, the children would stand on either side of the road and the boys remove their hats and the girls make their courtesies of respect as the minister passed by and unless in much hurry the minister would stop, whether he was riding or walking, and have a few words' conversation with the children who were taught to love and respect the minister.

As a descendant of Simon Willard, the first male laid in your beautiful cemetery, and of Daniel Willard, one of the founders and early superintendent of Newington Sunday School, and as one who

remembers all the pastors of your church from Dr. Brace's time when he was succeeded by Rev. William P. Aiken, I have been asked to continue the history from 1855 to the present time regarding the pastors this church has had since Dr. Brace's long service ended.

I remember well, and recall with much pleasure, the kindly and saintly face of Reverend William P. Aiken who succeeded Dr. Brace as pastor of this people. His face seemed to me as the expression of his love to God and to his fellow men, and when he spoke, the desire of his heart, for the good of his hearers, was surely evident. Much of the expression of his face has remained with you here in the face of his beloved sister, Mrs. Roger Welles, whose saintly form you laid to rest but a few days since in the family lot in your beautiful cemetery. Her's was a long life of usefulness. Useful? Yes! not only in the christian home where she presided over her large family of children, who justly "Rise up to call her blessed," but her life of usefulness was felt throughout the community where many, yes many, of the sick and afflicted were cared for by her, and their wants attended to and their needs supplied to the extent of her ability and means. Her sympathy for those in distress seemed to know no limit.

Mr. Aiken was not possessed of a powerful voice as some ministers but convincing and persuading, drawing men to the better life as he unfolded the truths he had himself formed and believed and practiced in his own life we can truly say from his youth up. He began at the age of 3 years to love to read his testament.

During Mr. Aiken's pastorate he had calls to go to other churches but he remained with the people of Newington for 10 years,5 to 1867. At the close of his third year as pastor he asked to be released to accept a call to another and larger church but at the earnest request of his people, expressed at a meeting called June 11, 1860, for the purpose of passing a resolution earnestly and sincerely asking him to withdraw his resignation and continue his loving acceptable service among them. He was moved to remain with the church and for several years longer till he was called to become principal of Lawrence Academy of Groton, Mass., in 1867.

Following Rev. Mr. Aiken the Rev. Sanford S. Martyn was ordained pastor April 29, 1868 and continued till his resignation in 1870 to become pastor of the church at New Hartford. Mr. Martyn was a graduate of Yale University where he took an honorable stand as scholar, receiving prizes for writing, speaking and debating while a member of the senior class at Yale Theological Seminary. In advocacy of his call to become pastor of this church, not only the church members joined, but 27 of the hearers of his sermons, during his preliminary stay among them, signed a paper expressing their intention soon to become members and their wish that he might be chosen to preach to them. This paper was by vote of the church ordered to be kept as part of the church record.

On the second sabbath in June, 1870, Rev. Dr. Robert G. Vermilye, then professor in Hartford Theological Seminary, began to supply the pulpit, and on July 3 became the stated preacher of the

church and continued so till Nov. 21, 1873, when, on account of failing health, he was obliged to cease his labors.

Dr. Vermilye was a scholarly and profound preacher and his sermons were appreciated and enjoyed by his hearers and remembered and spoken of long after he had passed away. He was, like many scholarly ministers, possessed of greater ambition and nervous force than was balanced by robust health and strength for continuance and endurance.

Dr. Vermilye closed his ministry on a common sabbath and it is recorded by Deacon Roger Welles that as he dispersed the symbols of the Saviour's love for the last time, and spoke his own parting words the tearful eyes of his congregation testified their love, sympathy and sorrow. He died July 5, 1875. His funeral was attended at Center Church, Hartford. His burial at Cedar Hill Cemetery. A few minutes before his death he committed his soul to his Lord in these few words: "And now, O my Saviour, keep me in life or death; I commit myself to Thee."

The seventh pastor of the church was Rev. William J. Thomson who began his services in 1875 and continued till 1879.

Mr. Thomson was a graduate of Columbia University, declining a professorship there in order to enter the ministry of Christ. He came to Newington from Seymour, Conn., where he had preached acceptably for two years. He was possessed of a happy faculty of winning and holding the young men of his parish for Christ.

He was a fine picture of physical strength and manliness but not of enduring health, and his failing strength induced him to discontinue as pastor. He ministered temporarily afterward as supply to the people of South Glastonbury and later at East Canaan, Conn. It was here that he finished his life work and died as bravely as he had lived at the age of 44 years, and is remembered and spoken of as a "Good Soldier of Christ," manfully yielding up his life in the service of His Master and Great Captain.

The eighth pastor was the Rev. John E. Elliott, a descendant of Elder Brewster.

Born in New London, Oct. 22, 1829, he was consecrated to the work of the Lord by an exceedingly pious mother in his infancy and early instructed in the truths and beauties brought out before him from the word of God. He graduated at Amherst College in 1854 and Hartford Theological Seminary in 1860.

He was ordained to the ministry in the Congregational church in Ridgebury where he became pastor. Afterwards he settled in Higganum, from there he went to the Home Missionary field in Iowa and Nebraska. That had been his long cherished purpose in the service, and his chosen work, but on account of the death of his brother and sister he felt called to return to the East and care for his aged mother in 1874. He preached at the Congregational church in South Glastonbury a few years and from there was called to Newington pastorate, serving here from 1879 till 1884. It has been said of him that his ministry was characterized by intense earnestness and perseverance in planning and studying those things that would

be useful in the spirituality of his people. He was very desirous also that the church finances receive the careful attention of his people and during his time of service the large debt of the Society was cancelled.

He was much interested and put forth great efforts to interest his people in the proposition to build a chapel adjoining the church, so useful in the work of the church, and the subscription was begun in his time and finished during Rev. Mr. Macy's time and the fine chapel built and enjoyed to the present day. By his efforts the young people's society of Christian Endeavor was organized in the church and has added much to its usefulness. He was a man of strict economy and was able to make his small salary cover his expenses, although educating his son at Amherst and scrupulously giving his tenth of his income to the Lord.

From Newington he spent about three years in Bridgewater, and from there was called to the state of Washington where he hoped to give the remainder of his life to the Home Missionary work, but failing health gradually caused his death in less than three months after beginning his work there. His body was brought East and buried in his native town of New London.

The ninth pastor, Rev. John Otis Barrows, was born in Mansfield, Conn., 1833. In 1860 he graduated from Amherst College, and took his theological course at Hartford and Andover seminaries.

He was called to North Hampton, New Hampshire, in 1863, where he preached for a number of years. Following this he preached at Exeter, N. H. It was here that he felt called to enter the Foreign Missionary work and in 1870 was sent by the A. B. C. F. M. as a missionary to Turkey.

He served ten and a half years in this field when he was obliged to return on account of the health of his family.

He preached for a time at Atchison, N. H., was called to become pastor at Newington Church in 1885 and faithfully served these people till 1891, as many will testify, as a very self-sacrificing pastor. The tender ministries of himself and his benevolent wife will long be remembered by the grateful people who received their care in sickness and affliction, also those who were helped by them in time of trouble.

He was much interested in getting the non-church-goers to attend the Sabbath services, and in this he was remarkably successful.

On one occasion, after several attempts on his part, one, who had long absented herself from church said: "I shall have to go to church now—Mr. Barrows will never let me alone till I do." And she resumed attendance and became interested and serviceable in the work of the church. Mr. Barrows had a wonderful frankness and fearlessness in rebuking the wrong-doer, speaking in words of love and tenderness such as to win the heart of his hearer. It is recorded that one of his parishioners declared after one of these occasions that "he never got such a dressing down in his life before," but remarked in almost the same breath: "There is nobody I respect more than I do Mr. Barrows." This sentiment he often repeated and it was the means

of doing much good—like pruning vines to bring forth better fruit.

Mr. Barrows had good success in awakening a sense of responsibility for action among those who were inclined to stay in the background and let others lead in prayer meeting and other work of the church, bringing many to active work in the different calls to service.

The temperance cause received his most earnest efforts, and by his methods the benevolent objects of the church were set forth, the blessed spirit of giving for Christ was manifest in increased offerings, and year by year gained an enviable prominence, the people being blessed in giving.

The tenth pastor was Rev. Herbert Macy, born in Fall River, Mass., in 1857, son of Alexander and Sarah Judkins Macy. Mr. Macy was graduated at Hartford Theological Seminary in 1883, served as pastor of the Fourth Congregational Church at San Francisco, Cal., in 1886., and later was pastor of the Third Congregational Church in Clinton, Mass. From there he went to St. Paul, where he organized the Olivet church and became its pastor. After three years of service there he returned to New England and was called to the pastorate of Newington Church in 1892, serving faithfully and diligently till the year 1919, a period of 27 years, the next longest in service as pastor to that of Rev. Joab Brace.

Mr. Macy was an earnest preacher, keeping up with the times, much interested in the conversion of the young with whom his labors were earnestly given and rewarded bountifully.

He was thoughful for the aged and infirm. Active in matters concerning the good not only of the church but the town and all its people, ever watchful for the interests of all. To those coming under his special care and needing advice and help in any matter concerning the individual or public good, to these Mr. Macy was ever helpful as many do testify of his thoughtful advice and Christian help given them in time of need or in trouble of any kind. As a preacher it is said of Mr. Macy that he "never preached a dull sermon." He "studied to be approved of God, rightly dividing the word of truth."

His sermon at the 100th anniversary of the building of this Church from the text in Timothy, the 3rd chapter ,15th verse, on the subject, "The church of the Living God. the pillar and ground of the truth," was considered a masterpiece.

We quote just one paragraph from this valuable sermon:

"What is more worthy of a celebration than a church? Nothing! Because the Church comprehends such precious interests vitally concerning us all. The School touches life on one side, the State on another side, but the Church touches life on all sides of its diameter and its circumference. It is this which enlists our hearts in this celebration. We can none of us repress the emotions that come to us on this occasion when we remember what the Church is to us, our homes, our state and the world.

"We yield ourselves to its claims and it begins to identify itself with all that is vital and precious in our experiences. It blesses our friendships, cements our home-ties, records our vows, comforts us in sorrow and affliction and death, stands with us by the open grave and

points our shrinking souls to heaven. This is why the celebration of a church thrills our souls. It affects not only the surface and temporary interests only, but those that are deep and eternal, because it is the Church of the Living God, and is blessed of Him." I would love to quote further from that great sermon but time will not allow.

The eleventh pastor of the Church was Rev. Howard A. Morton, serving from February, 1920, to May, 1921. Mr. Morton came to this church from Deep River, Conn., where he was pastor. He enlisted in the service of World War and returned to labor in the cause of the Pilgrim Memorial Fund, and in that capacity preached at Newington in November, 1919, and was much liked by the people of this Church—so much so that he was called to the pastorate here. He was well recommended by his people, among them Hon. Rollin U. Tyler of Deep River. He served faithfully during his short period.

The twelfth, now Acting Pastor, is Rev. Harry S. Martin, who began his services for this church in August, 1921, coming from the church in Wapping, Conn. Mr. Martin's father was a native of Maine, though he was born in Massachusetts and spent his youth in the town of Amesbury, the nome town of our beloved poet, John G. Whittier. Mr. Martin is showing himself to be an active, earnest preacher, with the qualities of a good pastor, active and interested in all matters pertaining to the church and the community.

Through his efforts a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association has been organized here and is in a good and flourishing condition, and its influence is being felt for good in the town. Mr. Martin adapts himself to all the interests of the church, not only preaching Christ and Him crucified to his people, but taking personal interest in the general good and advancement in the work of the Lord in this community. Taking up the work with his young, strong endeavors and his determination that the cause of Christ shall be well presented here and His claim to our services, our love and our devotion to His cause faithfully set forth.

Many gifts in aid of this church have been presented to the society by good and benevolent members and attendants of this parish, and their value is appreciated and their benefits enjoyed by all. Among the gifts we can mention the much-admired pipe organ, beautiful in appearance and in musical helps, and admired and enjoyed by all, was given to this church by the widow and children of Mr. Reuben C. Osbornd, late of Newington, in loving memory of him. His children were Mr. Newton Osborn of Newington and Mrs. Edward Buck of Wethersfield. In 1898 Mr. Henry M. Robbins, a much respected and useful citizen of Newington, gave $2,000 for the benefit of the church choir and music; also $5,000 for the uses and purposes of the Ecclesiastical Society, a generous and ever helpful gift.

Mary Willard, daughter of Josiah Willard, left a fund of £80 for educational purposes. This fund, through the good care and attention given it by the trustees appointed, now has a balance on hand of over $4,000, and has done much good in the cause for which it was given.

DeForest Willard, of Philadelphia, one of Newington's sons, who rose by his earnest effort and careful study to be recognized by his brothers in the profession as authority on surgery of the bones, gave a fund for the care of the cemetery, the income to be used each year in the necessary up-keep and care of the grounds and monuments. He was the son of Daniel H. Willard, whose home stood on the knoll between Pratt Francis's home and the old Willard homestead, now owned by Dairy Commissioner Holt, near the brick school house at Newington Junction. This Willard homestead was entirely consumed by fire on the evening of the marriage of Mr. Newton Osborn, and the guests on leaving the Osborn home saw the fire.

The late William A. Hubbard, who lived opposite this church, next to the Town Hall, gave by his will the most of his estate, amounting to over $13,000, to the Ecclesiastical Society of Newington, subject to the life use of his brother, Fred Hubbard. This is the largest gift received by the church and reflects honor to its donor, whom we remember as a modest, quiet citizen. Interested in all good work of the town and church, yet in his feeble health he was not able to render much personal assistance, yet it was his desire to be of service and so arranged that his money would eventually help the cause of Christ here in Newington. A good gift from a good man.

Newington is a beautiful town, finely located midway between two large cities, enjoying prosperities never dreamed of by its early settlers, who had no direct road to Hartford, being obliged to travel through Wethersfield or through West Hartford till the road along Cedar Mountain was built, connecting them so readily with Hartford. This direct communication has resulted in much improvement in the town and year by year additional advantages and helps have come to our people till now the good line of trolley cars transport them readily. Electric lights adorn and illuminate thir homes.

Fine brick school houses have taken the places of the little wooden structures so long used by the scholars. Fine homes adorned by fine surroundings have sprung up. Automobiles convey the people to and fro, new streets are laid out, new homes rapidly built, and could our forefathers see now the town they loved and helped to found and perpetuate thriving beyond all their fondest thoughts and hopes, would they not feel that God had rewarded them and answered the many prayers that have ascended to Him from this sacred place of worship which they builded to His name.

Let us as a people rejoice in the cause and lend our aid gladly and cheerfully to the work of the Lord here in our midst, and in that way we receive a blessing ourselves and the church and its good work will be sustained and prosper.

It is good to recall the names and faces and the works of the good men and women who in time past have labored earnestly to make Newington what it is today. The burden and responsibility now is ours, to perpetuate their good works and carry on even greater improvements than they with their limited means and advantages could do. Doth not the world look to us that we "hold fast" what they left us and press on to better work in His name.

One preacher and historian has told us that "He who taketh not a fond look backward to our ancestry will never take the best look forward to posterity." The past is well recorded. Its saints have gone to their well-earned rest. The present is ours to hold fast that which has come to us, and as a priceless inheritance, and hand it down with all its beauty and glory, unsoiled, to those who shall follow us.

May the Church of Newington hear the command as given to Moses when the Lord's voice came to him by the shore of the Red Sea, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." May this be our motto till we meet again at another similar anniversary granted through the blessing of God.

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SKETCH OF SOME OF THE EARLY FAMILIES OF THE PARISH

By MRS. ARLAN P. FRANCIS

WE ARE looking backward to-day, two hundred years! Can you visualize the Newington of that remote period?

Let imagination wing us back for a moment to stand on Cedar Mountain—we casually speak of it as Cedar Hill—and look down upon the valley, so different then from our own environment.

The forests first catch our eye. Even in my childhood days—for I have reached an age when one is indulgently permitted to babble of childish memories—there were large tracts of woodland. A pity that the ax has wrought so great a change!

Where are the roads? you ask; mere footpaths yet, or lanes at best. The houses? Yes! Here and there—not many—well-scattered mostly. A little handful to the North; others strung along the Center; more again at the South End. But don't think of them as white, nestling amid the green! At this time, probably, none were painted; later on there were some red houses.

It was well along in the growth of the place, when a good matron, commenting upon an improvement desired for the church, said, "If it is done, the people who live in the white houses will have to pay for it!"

It is a peaceful scene before us! Almost it tempts us to envy! No honking automobile or silent speedster threaten the pedestrian. No Americanization problems of church or school. True, the families of the very first settlers are said to have gathered nights at the fortified house of Joseph Andrus for protection from Indians, the men sleeping with their fire-arms at hand; but there is not even a tradition of an attack. This happy valley was spared the horrors of Indian warfare.

Moreover, at this time, when we are supposed to be gazing valleyward, all Indian menace was past. The tiny hamlet is now the "Westwardmost Society" of Wethersfield, separate and distinct from the mother church.

It is not known who came directly after the five "pioneers," but many of our family names are on record before 1720. Some are gone, or are passing from among us, but a few still occupy the homesteads and uphold the offices of their progenitors.

The bare names of these earlier settlers would be, to many in this audience, as meaningless as a page from a telephone directory. It is only as we can imagine them in flesh and blood, dwelling in their homes, building up the infant church and carrying forward the affairs of the community, that they become real to us.

Various tales and traditions have been handed down through the years. Each family has its own, but it is largely through the descendants that we judge of the forbears. As these families married and intermarried, there came to be an almost general relationship, which tended to similarity of thought and habit. Reverence for the Church went hand in hand with their love of education. The youth of those days were well taught—private schools and tutors supplementing the district schools that were early instituted. There was no grinding through the grammar school mill into a high school hopper. The Town did not pay the bills. It cost the individual child the maximum of effort and untold sacrifices on the part of the parents. That this was ever a musical parish is evinced by the selection of the name Newington. In the new meeting-house the hymns of Isaac Watts were sung with love and fervor. Much later on, "Glee Clubs" were formed, gathering at the houses of the members for secular music. I just remember one of these "Glee" evenings, and the sympathetic smile bestowed by Mrs. John Stoddard upon the very small girl being banished to bed.

But we are getting ahead of our dates! Imagination now may take us, on an April day in 1716, to the house of James Francis to attend the first meeting of the new society, to perfect plans, the ways and means for the building of the meeting-house so long desired. We can well believe it a serious assemblage. It was a great step forward which they had taken and they fully realized its importance.

Among those gathered in council it is reasonable to assume were John and Ephriam Whaples, Simon Willard, Jabez and Eliphalet Whittlesey, Nathaniel Churchill, three Stoddards, John and Joseph Camp, two Hunns, two Andruses, John and Ephriam Deming, besides James and Thomas Francis, and others less familiar and long since lost. All these men were among the petitioners for the new parish in 1715. Josiah Willard was chosen clerk of the Society. No sinecure that! But for many years the Willard name was synonymous with public service. Most happily do I remember the last, Daniel Willard, whose big frame covered an equally big heart, and who never failed to give a smile and a word of greeting to the children. Would that the family still dwelt on the old hearth stone, but it is only as Willard Street that the name exists to-day, appropriately applied to the road running by their old homes.

Following Willard Street northward we come to the old rooftree of Jonathan Stoddard; hard by is the Camp house with its long sloping roof; between the two stands another Stoddard house of a later

generation, but this also is old-built, probably about 1793. There is a Sycamore tree by the roadside in front of the Church—I remember when there were two there—planted by Jonathan Stoddard in 1792. In front of his own house he set two more, bringing the young trees from the Farmington Meadows; "Buttonwoods," they called them then. Both of this pair survive. It was a goodly deed! Give the old tree a look when you pass out and think how long it has endured! Perhaps some one's descendant may be moved to plant another!

Still further north lived—are yet living—the Nathaniel branch of the Stoddard tree. Springing from a common root, Sergent John, who lived in Wethersfield around 1740, these Stoddards, too, have long been "standbys." Deacon Rufus was the choir leader of my earliest recollection, the office falling at his untimely death to Mr. Laurens Kellogg. Mr. John Stoddard played the 'cello for the Church service before the advent of an organ, but that was before my day.

Camp is a "good name" that has persisted since 1712. Long may it continue! There was a Col. Joseph Camp of staunch character, of whom many annecdotes used to be related, but I cannot recall them sufficiently to quote. Ask our Deacon Joseph!

Yet northward lived the Hunns of pioneer settlement. Samuel Hunn did well his part, as did his descendants, the last of whom I dimly recall. It was this Mr. Hunn who was instrumental in the erection of the north row of horse-sheds; thus locating them to save the expense of fencing that portion of the cemetery which they border. Would that he had left a descendant to replace them with a less conspicuous fence, now that they are not needed as sheds! A little boy now lives in the last of the old Hunn houses, not of direct Hunn descent, but of Whaples ancestry, who sometime will be interested to know that Ephriam Whaples is on record in 1712. Between Hunn and Whaples, he comes closely to the beginnings!

While at the North End, we will stop for a moment's mention of the Seymour family, although it was around 1740 when Bevil Seymour came down from Hartford, where the family had been established for several generations. His grandson, Deacon Jeremiah, built the first brick house in the place. Though now pulled down, it must be generally remembered, as the post-office at the Junction was long housed there.

Deming is one of the oldest names, John Deming being one of the Committee to present the petition to the General Assembly in 1713. There have followed many, many of the name, scattered from the north end to the south, but to us the name is summed up in "Jedediah Deming," our dear "Deacon Jeddy." Taking him as a type of the line, what a vision of good—and tall—men arises before us! And with him we associate his daughter Ellen, whom we still mourn—we need her to-day! Everyone's friend, wise councilor, entertaining companion— there is none to fill her place!

It is to another Deming, Deacon Levi, that we are indebted for many of the trees that beautify our church lawn. A committee was appointed to attend to this matter, but most of the actual work fell to the willing hands of Deacon Levi. We are grateful to him! And, by

the way, how many of the children at the Center School know that one of the trees on the school grounds was planted in memory of Mrs. Ann Deming—a long time teacher and most excellent woman. Associated with John Deming on that committee in 1713 was Jabez Whittlesey, who took an active part in the building of the new meeting-house, in which he was the first to bear the title of Deacon. He and his brother, Eliphalet, headed a goodly company of upright, honorable men. It is not so long since a Deacon Whittlesey officiated among us. We miss him. Through various intermarriages, we still claim Whittlesey blood, but the name has passed.

Taking a long step to the South End, we find Nathaniel Churchill and his brother, Samuel, prominent citizens of those early days. Charles, a son of Samuel, born in 1723, became one of its most distinguished leaders. His home was the "show place" of the countryside, wherein a lavish hospitality was maintained. Architecturely, it was celebrated far and wide. The base-relief near the entrance shows the beautiful doorway. The old mansion has fallen into decay, but we still count Churchills proudly including Miss Mary Churchill, whose energy and activities up to four score and over are worthy her lineage.

At the ordination of Rev. Mr. Williams, in 1722, Ebenezer Kilborn and James Francis were on the committee appointed "to keep a public house of entertainment." For generations the Kilborns held the center of the town. Some of their houses are now occupied by later comers. Of their great cherry trees, that turned that portion of the place into a bit of "Old Japan" at blossoming-time, hardly a branch is left.

There are now no descendants here of James Francis, but his brother, Thomas, has been followed by a long line. We lament to-day the recent death of Herbert Francis. Few have served both church and town so long and faithfully, or have been so universally beloved. Thomas, sixth in line from the original Thomas, is ably carrying on his brother's work, and could ill be spared from among us.

Two or three generations later, descendants of Robert Francis, a younger brother of James and Thomas, followed their cousins to Newington and are still helping to swell our ranks.

Henry Kirkham and his wife, Martha, were among the original members of the new church in 1722. Their son, John, at the age of sixteen, entered the Revolutionary Army as a musician, remaining until its close. This family has been marked by musical talent and by ready speakers of wit and originality. We need them back again.

In 1734 Capt. Martin Kellogg came to Newington, buying the house that was built for Rev. Mr. Williams, and in which he lived until his death in 1753. To give the early history of his life, his capture by the Indians in the massacre at Deerfield, Mass., his long captivity among them in Canada, his escape, and settlement in Wethersfield in 1716, would require a paper by itself. Suffice it to say, that he was one of the most noteworthy men of that period, ably filling the manifold positions to which he was called. A unique service that

he rendered humanity was the taking of a number of Indian boys to teach, instructing them not only in the rudiments of an English education, but in the essentials of Christian living, as well, thus literally returning good for evil to the race that had caused him such loss and suffering.

There have been nine Martin Kelloggs in direct descent. The last three are claimed in the South, but here's hoping that some day one of them may return to carry on his so many-times great grandfather's name.

There are two divisions of the Welles family, one branch having dropped an "E" in the spelling of the name, but both are descended from Gov. Thomas Welles, one of the most important personages in the earliest history of the State.

William Wells (without the "E") settled in Newington in 1738. His sons, Elijah and Deacon James, lived where Mr. Osborn and Mr. Walker now reside. Deacon Origen was son of Deacon James. His farm is now occupied by the Children's Home. Some of his descendants of a younger generation were lured from us by California, drawing the Latimers, another old-time family, in their wake. A loss to the town.

It was considerably later, 1785, that Gen. Roger Welles (with the "E") came over the mountain. He at once became an outstanding figure in the community, although he died in his prime, only forty-two! At his funeral Rev. Joshua Belden said of him, "The glory of Newington has departed!" But he left worthy descendants who still uphold the best traditions of his name. To his grandson, Deacon Roger Welles, we and the future generations owe a debt of gratitude for his historical writings, "The annals of Newington" among them, a work that is a monument of patience and erudition. That his "mantle" has fallen to his son, Deacon Stanley, we have evidence to-day.

In connection with the publication of the "Annuls," another influential family stands forth—Messrs. Martin and Henry Robbins, generously assuming all financial responsibility. Especially public spirited, the Robbins were ever liberal toward all calls for both time and money. Extending back to 1740, the family played a large part in the affairs of the town.

What would this Church have been without the Beldens! From the days of the Rev. Joshua, they have been a power for good. In the Sunday School and in the fostering of a missionary spirit among us, their influence is beyond estimate. Gladly we point to Deacon Joshua, our long-time Superintendent, and give him the Eastern Greeting, "May you live a thousand years!"

There is much more that might be told; such wealth of material is hard to choose from. But it has been our aim to emphasize the spirit that animated these ancestors. "Let somebody else do it," was not their slogan. They put their own shoulders to the wheel. The Church, the schools, the town interests (which was not interest on debts) all received their hearty allegiance. Theirs was a gracious hospitality, a gentle courtesy, and on occasion, a delicate formality that we well might imitate.

"We are omnibusses in which all our ancestors ride!" Let us not make them ashamed of their carryall!

SERMON, THE ETERNAL CHURCH

By THE PASTOR

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:6-14 15, Psalm 122. Text, Matthew 16:18b

"I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT."

BEFORE attempting to preach upon a theme in any way suitable for such an occasion as this, the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of this church, I must first plead for your forbearance and sympathy. Dr. Joseph Parker, who was at one time the pastor of the London Tabernacle, and a very noted preacher, advised ministers never to appeal to an audience for sympathy because, he said, "An audience has no sympathy." This may have been true of his London Tabernacle audience, but it is not true of you here in Newington. I am sure all of you understand the difficulty one must encounter who would attempt to add anything further to the information already given about the history of this church.

Some of you were present at the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary held here twenty-five years ago and you well know how admirably the story of this church was told by those who, both from their own memories and from careful inquiries into the records, were familiar with its past years. Some of you have read the addresses given at that time and you have noted the brilliant and instructive sermon preached by him who was then pastor. Many of you heard the addresses of yesterday which so brightly re-illuminated the many pages of this church which the moving hand of time has written. And so as one who is under the necessity of preaching something appropriate I do not fear to ask for your indulgence because, like myself, you must have wondered how one could find a theme relevant to this celebration which has not already been considered.

But after all, when we turn to the subject of His church we are in a field of the inexhaustible "Riches of Christ," from which we may always dig new treasures no matter how many have mined there before us, and I think there is a theme which grows out of this occasion that will provide us with a topic profitable for discussion. It is the fact that right here in Newington we have the divinely founded and eternal Church of Christ. With your permission and your patience this is what I wish to speak about. It is a great theme and I do not promise to stick very closely to this subject, but I hope as well as I may to bring this truth before us all—that our Church, whose two hundredth anniversary we now commemorate, is a part of the universal eternal Church founded by our divine Lord and Master himself.

In order to bring out this fact more clearly, we have taken part of the words which our Lord spoke to Simon Peter in those memorable moments when Peter had discovered just who Jesus was. He had asked them, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" and they had answered and told him the different opinions which the

people held concerning Him. Then He had asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" and Peter had answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Without going into the matter in detail it is evident that Jesus' approving reply to Peter and His words, "Upon this rock I will build my Church," were as if He had said to Peter, "Blessed art thou Simon, son of Jonah, upon the rock of my divine nature and by men who, like thee, know me to be the Son of God I will build my Church."

But the part of our Lord's reply which concerns us this morning is the comment which He made about that Church which He said He would build. He said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This strong and vivid language at once gives us a sense of profound mystery, of terrible strength, of everlasting endurance against all odds however fearful. The figure "Gates of Hell" was quite familiar to our Lord's hearers. Hell was imagined under the figure of a walled enclosure which confined evil powers. If the gates were opened, these powers might escape, and the meaning was, as Jesus used the figure, that even if the evil and sin of this world which is at least partly restrained, should break forth in all its power, if legions of wicked beings should be given the opportunity to assault with all their might His Church, still that Church would stand undestroyed and undefeated.

Perhaps the first thought which comes to us is, this may have been true of the Church which He founded; but can it apply to the Church now? In this modern maze of sects and beliefs and disbeliefs can we discover this original Church, or what is hardest of all, can we take our own little church and say that this First Church of Christ in Newington, Connecticut, can be identified with that mysterious, terrible, unconquerable and eternal Church against which our Lord said the powers of evil were helpless? I suppose the absurdity of this idea at once comes into our minds as we think of our Church made up of our own home people with all their faults and failings and good points, but let us not become skeptical on account of the human factor in our Church. If it seems absurd to say of this church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, it was far more contrary to reason when Jesus said it of a church which hardly existed at all, at least in any visible form.

Jesus said this about His Church when He and His disciples were in a region among the mountains of Lebanon. Suppose we had been there; suppose we had been intelligent, sane-minded pagans, Romans for instance, and that we had been hiding behind some rock watching Him and His little band and listening to their conversation. We would have had difficulty to suppress our laughter as we saw this little company of Galileans, most of them young men, some of them mere boys from out a region that was a mere dot on the great map of the Roman Empire, gathered around their young leader who was making claims for himself such as no other had ever made before and been believed, and who was telling them about an organization which He would found that could not be destroyed.

The contrast between His ambitions and the actual facts would have been pathetic from their sheer improbability. There He was calling Peter "Blessed," that same Peter who, a little while later, would stand outside Pilate's judgment hall and deny with oaths that he had ever known Him. There was that Judas who would betray Him into the hands which would nail him to a cross. There were the others who, when He should decide to leave the safety of the Lebanon mountains to go to Jerusalem, would say to Him, "Master the Jews of late sought to stone Thee! and goest Thou thither again," and there was that disciple who said, "Let us go that we may die with Him," because he saw nothing but total disaster for every one of them. These are but a few illustrations which we might choose from among many to show that at the very beginning of the Church the human element was present which made it very difficult to apply these words of Jesus "The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," to the Church in its visible and human prospects. And having these examples before us let us not hastily reject as impossible of application to our own Church these words, "The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." The very difficulty we find in applying this description to our own Church on account of our own problem of the human element in it tends to indicate our similarity and affinity to the Church which Jesus was describing rather than our unlikeness and non-relationship to it.

But there is another and a more common and practical difficulty which makes us hesitate to say "the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against" our Church. It is our generally prevalent habit of not ascribing to our Church its due honor and glory. It is one of the grave and serious defects of our Protestant faith. I know you may say, "Do we not often sing hymns praising the Church?"—hymns such as "I love Thy kingdom Lord, the house of Thine abode," and "The Church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord, She is His new creation by water and the word," or "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God," and etc.?" But can you say that we always have our own Church in mind and that we feel we are praising it rather than some vague Church whose whereabouts we only very dimly perceive?

And we have our phrases such as, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him," or "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord," and so on; but would you care to say there is not often a hollow sound in our recitations? I do not think I make an unjust criticism if I say that we do not always feel quite as glad as we might feel, when some one says to us, "We will go into the house of the Lord." If we translate this into ordinary language, we will hear it in many a home as mother saying to little Willie, "Come William, there goes the bell, it is time to get washed and dressed for church," and I think we can truly say in many instances that little Willie's face does not beam with smiles at the proposition. I am sure we might hear it in many homes as, mother saying to father, "Come, we shall be too late to go at all if you

do not hurry, the bell rang twenty minutes ago." Perhaps it is such translation at home of these words, "We will go into the house of the Lord," that make the "I was glad" part sound rather hollow, when we try to say it here. But however this may be, it certainly is true that the Church does not mean for us all it ought to mean nor occupy the place in our respect and affections that it ought to occupy.

Think how far reaching the idea is that one can be a Christian without being a Church member. In the words of a certain modern, well known divinity scholar, W. E. Orchard, we may find the fallacy of this position clearly stated. He says, "Those who declare that they love Christ, and stand aloof from the Church, might well ask how this coincides with his love for the Church, whether their action, if universally followed, would not be suicidal, and especially whether it is not mere laziness asking to be excused a difficult problem." This is putting the non-membership problem of many Christian people strongly in the accusative case; but it is the statement of a fact even if we do get some discomfort from it.

It would be quite unwise and also untrue to say that only Church members are Christians. In a way it is perhaps to the credit of our Protestant position that one may have faith in Christ even when faith in the Church has been lost; but it is equally false and unwise to overlook the logic of the position which inevitably shows us that, let all adopt this course, then the days would soon come when there would be no Christianity at all. No matter how bad they are, there simply must be Church members, if there are going to be any Christians, for Christianity is far more than a matter of mere individual opinion. It is a living faith. It grows out of historic facts that happened in the past. To be continuous it must be carried on by some kind of an organization. It must overlap every age. In each year and each century it must take into account time past, time present, time yet to come, and no individuals can do this by themselves.

Over in Hartford in the Morgan Memorial, as you all know, there is a vast and precious collection of art treasures. Suppose, for a moment, these were all taken away and given back to their individual owners; for a while the treasures would remain, but it is certain that only a few would ever see them and they would no longer be of any public benefit. And after a while the days would surely come when they would fall into the hands of disinterested persons and eventually perish. If they are to be protected, if it is to be possible for them to instruct and inspire the present and the future generations of Hartford, it is absolutely necessary that they be gathered together and put into the keeping of some organization which has the power to protect and preserve them as no individual could possibly do. And so it is with Christianity and its truths. Organizations there must be, if they are to be kept pure and to be saved for those now living and for the many more who yet shall live, and to have organization there must be members who gather together for this purpose because they see that "two or three gathered in a common purpose have powers impossible to them if they remained one by one." This is what we

often miss as Protestants. We seem to lack the power to see the function of the Church. Nearly every one of us, without a doubt, knows that Christianity is a historic religion that reaches over a long period of years, but somehow we do not seem to see that the Church is just as historic as is Christianity, and just as necessary to it as flesh is to a living body.

Even in this age when indifference to the Church is so general, I do not think it would be true to say that indifference to Christianity is also general. Indeed, it is often those who say that they have but little use for the Church who are the very ones that often pay Christianity a kind of left-handed compliment by saying they object to the Church because they do not think its members are Christians; but no matter what one thinks, the Church is, after all, the source of Christianity. Even the judgments we make against it we learn from it. The very principles by which we test its Christianity are those which the Church has preserved for us. As I say this you may be thinking, "No, we get our Christ and the principles by which we make our judgments from our Bibles," and so you do, perhaps, but just how did you get your Bible? It came to you through the Church. It is the Church which has preserved it through all these years.

Surely a time like this is a proper time for us to glory in our Church as it represents to us the great, historic medium which bridges the great gulf of time and enables us to have the Master with us in spirit as He was with that other little company in the flesh so long ago. But maybe you say, "This is what we have been doing," "Have we not heard the history of our Church?", "Has it not been told to us how in 1712 at a town meeting in Wethersfield permission was granted to make a separate parish in the west part of the town, and to erect a new meeting house for the Church, and how in 1716 'The frame of a Church was raised,' and from then until now there has been a building for worship in this place?" Yes, you have heard this but it is not the whole story; it is only a very little of it. What you have heard is simply the founding of the Newington Church. To get the true significance of this Church; to see it in all its greatness; to feel that this place is Holy; to dare to say about it, "The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," you will have to go far beyond these events which happened in Wethersfield two hundred years ago. You will have to multiply that two hundred by ten if you would have the whole story. Not the founding of the Newington Church, but the founding of the Church in Newington you will have to consider, if you would ascribe to it the honor and glory due its Holy name.

Whence came this Church which came to Newington? How came the Fathers to have this ambition to build a house for Christian worship in this place? Perhaps at some time you have been late arriving at some play or picture drama, and as you became interested you wished you might have been present at the beginning so you would have better understood the acts that were being played and the scenes to come later. And thus it is with us and the Church: we have arrived late; she has been playing her part long before we were here. O, that we might turn back Time's moving picture so that we might

understand the story of the Church, no, not of the Church but this Church better!

We should see the little company coming along the forest trail from Massachusetts Bay to the Connecticut. We should see the stormy ocean and the little ship with its one hundred and two passengers who had in their hearts their covenant with God which they were bringing to the new world as the Israelites of old carried the ark of their covenant across the desert. We should see unrolled before us all of England's history. We should see the contest between the Bishops and the Puritan scholars and the tragedy of the fires at Smithfield. We should see the contest between the Crown of England and the triple crown of the Papal power, and the tragedy of the inquisition. We should see the times of Wickliffe and his doctrines. We should see the days of Grosseteste, the times of Hugh of Avalon. We should see Thomas à Becket when he came before the King and defied him on behalf of the poor of England, and we should see him dead at the altar in Canterbury Cathedral.

We should see the days of the great Anslem. We should see the coming of William the Conqueror and see the great Landfranc restore order in Britain. We should see the dark days when the lamp of learning had gone out, and we should see the Venerable Bede fanning it into flame again with his scholarship. We should see the Roman missionaries under Augustine, seeking to establish their missions in Britain. We should see the little island of Iona and the great Irish monasteries where lived Patrick, Columbanus and Columba. We should see Northern Africa and the little town of Hippo near the ruins of old Carthage where Augustine the Great was guiding the Church through those days when Rome was falling.

We should see the times of Constantine and see him put upon his banners the sign of the cross, saying, "In this sign we shall conquer." We should see the dreadful contest between old Pagan Rome and Christianity. We should see the trans-Tiber district where today stands the Vatican palace. We should see the Christian slaves gathering in Catacombs and other hidden places to worship their crucified Saviour. Often would we see them in the Colliseum and hear them saying "Ave, Caesar, nos morituri te salutamus" while the lions were roaring in their dens.

We should see old Jerusalem. We should stand "Beside the Temple There." We should see the great apostle reasoning with the mob. We should see the days when Stephen suffered martyrdom for the "name," and finally we should see that room, and, "that glorious band, the chosen few, on whom the spirit came." We should hear "the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." We should see "Cloven tongues as of Fire" sitting upon them. We should hear them speak with other tongues as they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Here is the thread of history, the scarlet cord that is woven into our Church. Here it is reaching back into those days when the spirit of Christ took possession of the hearts of men.

This is but a small part of the whole story of our Church. It is a mere synopsis of what it has done before we came, but where can

you find anything like this? What institution can you name, what organization, what order, what government, what anything is there to compare with this continuous, living Church reaching clear from Newington to Israel. Do you think it is reckless to say the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? When all these ages stand back of it?

O, come, let us think of our Church in this way. Let us see it as a branch that is living because it is joined onto that living vine, the greater Church of Jesus Christ. The new State Bank building in Hartford has a number of great stone columns in front of it. One seeing the stone columns now would think the heavy pediment and roof depended upon them for support, but when the building was being erected, the pediment and the roof were made before the columns were put in place. They do but little to bear any weight. The fact is that the roof really holds them in place, and they, great, heavy, handsome columns though they are, like the rest of the building, depend for support upon the foundations. The foundations are hidden out of sight below the ground. The columns stand in full view, and appear as though they would stand for ages—so they will,—as long as the foundation remains. It is like our Church. It seems as though it depended upon such and such a one but it is not so. It depends upon the foundations, the foundations hidden in history which I have tried to lay bare. It rests upon the "Word of our God," and because it does rest upon His word, like His word, it shall stand forever. And the important question for us in our celebration of this two hundredth anniversary of the coming of the Church to Newington is that you and I each ask ourselves, "What is our personal relation to this divinely founded, eternal Church?" "Are we standing within its shelter secure upon its immovable foundations? Do you have union with the Church because,

'She on earth hath union with God the three in one
And mystic, sweet communion with those whose rest is won?
O happy ones and Holy, Lord give us grace that we
Like them the meek and lowly on High may dwell with Thee'."

—Amen.

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HISTORY OF NEWINGTON SUNDAY SCHOOL

By JOSHUA BELDEN

HISTORY tells us that the Newington Sunday School was started here June 20, 1819. But I believe the seeds of the school were planted many years before this, for when Rev. Joshua Belden was the pastor, after preaching two long sermons, he would invite the younger portion of the audience to meet him in the little room in the tower of the church, for the purpose of studying the Shorter Catechism. I do not know how many responded to the invitation, but enough so that he held the class for a number of years. I acknowledge it was not a Bible school, but it was a Sunday school, and involved a good deal of hard study at home to be able to give the correct answers to those profound theological questions, as I very well found out, as a boy, when I tried to prepare for a similar class that the Rev. W. P. Aikin

held in the old Center school house on a week day. I have been told that my great grandfather knew the Assembly Catechism so well that when he could not sleep at night he would repeat the whole of it, questions and answers, from beginning to end, without missing a single one of those hard, dry subjects. Whether he found it a remedy for sleepless nights or not, I cannot say; neither can I recommend it for I have never tried it. The credit of establishing the Sunday school here is not given to the pastor nor even to the church at large, but to a band of faithful, devoted young ladies, Prudence Kellogg Atwood, Electa Kellogg Whittlesey, Mary Wells Stoddard, Harriet Benham, Julia Churchill, Alma Camp, Mary and Martha Brace.

Miss Churchill, in her diary, under the date of June 20, 1819, writes: "This day hath been solemn. A Sunday school was established in this place. Four little children were committed to my care, to instruct on the Sabbath. O, Lord, help me to do my duty toward them, and wilt Thou touch their young and tender minds by the influences of Thy spirit."

This school has been blessed throughout its more than one hundred years of its life with devout consecrated workers. The school was started in 1819 and then, because there was not any provision made for heating the church, it was given up for the winter months. But in 1831 the Newington School is reported as being held during the winter months. The next spring the church organized the school and elected Daniel Willard as the first Superintendent, who served for eighteen years. The last five years he was assisted by Wm. Deming on account of Mr. Willard being out of town for the most of the time. The church has continued to elect the officers and help meet its expenses. The school met in the auditorium of the present building, but it presented a very different appearance both outside and inside from what it is today. There was a tall, slender spire, which was removed in 1837. There was not any bell in the tower until 1828 and two rows of windows on each side with small window panes. One window back of the pulpit, which for a time had neither shade nor blind, so that the hot summer sun shone in the afternoon unresistingly on Dr. Brace's back, until one Sunday he had to change his position for, as he told his congregation, he could not stand it any longer for the sweat was running down into his boots. After this a pair of blinds relieved the situation. There was no provision made for heating or lighting the building.

Instead of the present pews, there were square ones with seats on three sides, so that one-third of the audience had their backs to the minister. There was one pew in the gallery back of the singers' seats, so closed in that only the heads of those who sat there could be seen. We look back now to those days of our fathers when every one went to church, and wish that that habit prevailed now. But I wonder what our pastor would think of some things that we are told were done in those high-backed pews. Dea. Levi S. Deming said at the 175th anniversary of our church that sometimes cards were played and wine drunk during the sermon by those persons in the pew. Dr. Brace held a Bible class of young men in that pew or room. He was not

that stern, austere man without humor that his picture, which hangs on the wall here, would make us expect. My father told me he attended that class in the little room and one night he went in, and there not being any light he thought there was no one in the room, when suddenly out of the darkness came the doctor's gruff voice saying, "Who comes here? Old King Cole?"

At the close of his ministry here the whole Sunday school, to the number of some two hundred, met one evening at his house and, through their Superintendent, Dea. Levi S. Deming, presented him with a large easy chair. In his reply he said, "It is about the first luxury that ever came into my house." There was not any question books or papers used in the first years of the school. Texts of Scripture were learned and recited. The first question books, called Newcomb's were used in 1840, when Dea. Origen Wells was Superintendent. Afterwards we had the Union Question Book, each scholar buying a book for himself. Since then we have used the International, and some classes for a time used the Graded Lessons. In an old note book of Dea. Origen Wells, in 1840, he has recorded the names and ages of the members of the school. There were seven classes of boys and young men from the ages of seven to twenty-four. All had men for their teachers. Then there were nine classes of young ladies or girls, seven of whom were seventeen or under; the other two classes were evidently a little over seventeen, but the deacon made no attempt to give their age. I do not know whether they refusd to answer when asked, or that he did not dare to inquire. Anyway, human nature has not changed very much. The good deacon lived in the farm house of the Children's home, and he was nearly blind during his last years. He was very much opposed to dancing, and I remember very distinctly of meeting him a little north of the old parsonage early one morning when I was twelve or thirteen years old, and when I told him who I was he told me he was on his way to see the pastor to urge him to preach against that sinful practice. Then he told me what a bad thing it was to do. I did not promise never to indulge. I certainly had not up to that time, and since then, with the exception of a few times walking through a dance called Virginia Reel, I am certainly guiltless.

No singing books were used and singing was not introduced for many years, save in the infant class, as it was then called, which met in the little north room upstairs, where songs called "I want to be an Angel," "Little Drops of Water, Little Drops of Sand" were taught the class. While Dea. C. K. Atwood was Superintendent, in the 60's, Gen. Martin Kellogg gave the school fifty copies of a singing book entitled "Sabbath School Bell." Since that time singing of gospel hymns has had a prominent part in the worship of the school. Mr. Herbert C. Francis and others were a great help for a number of years by accompanying the pianist with their violins. Mr. H. L. Kellogg for a number of years served very acceptably as our Chorister, and now for several years the school has been greatly blessed with the able leadership of Geo. W. Hanbury. On June 1, 1858, the church voted "That the afternoon of the second Sabbath in each month be

devoted to the catechetical instruction of the children. This was done for a time and then changed to the monthly concert, when the school sat in the body of the house and class after class arose and recited verses of Scripture. Then some one, usually from out of town, talked to the school. I can remember some of the stories that Father Hawley, the city missionary of Hartford, told us. He said to us boys that when we went for the cows Sunday evening to let down the bars very still. The school for many years maintained a library of 700 or 800 books, but since we have had the Town library there has not been much call for books, and now we are giving each Sunday some six different papers. In 1846 there were taken in the school forty copies of the Wellspring, also the Temperance Advocate. I remember very well how pleased I was once a month to receive the Child's Paper. Since 1860 regular offerings have been taken for benevolence, and before that time Dr. Brace tells of contributions made by the school for benevolent purposes. During the last 61 years we have given $9,750 for charitable purposes besides helping to pay for the expenses of the school.

There have been admitted to the church on profession of faith since 1863, from the school, 355, as shown by the church calendar. The attendance during these years has been very good for so small a church. The average attendance each year has run from 64 to 168. In 1831, 23 teachers and 148 scholars. In 1841, when Dea. Origen Wells was Superintendent, the average for the year was 120; when Rev. J. O. Barrows was our pastor, the average attendance for one year was 167, and the next year 168.

Our young men have always been ready to respond to their country's call in its defense. In the Revolutionary War, when the population of Newington was only about 500, 100 were enrolled as its defenders. In 1812, 40 answered the call. In the Civil War Dea. Atwood who was the Superintendent, reports that 12 members had enlisted. In the World War I counted the names on the Roll of Honor that stands on the Green of 20 young men of the school and one young lady. During 1883 and 1884 Mr. J. B. Smith of New Britain took an active interest in the work of the schools belonging to the Wethersfield and Berlin S. S. Union and prepared a list of questions for each previous quarter's lessons, for a written examination of all who would take it. The papers on which the answers were written were given to a committee, who marked them on a scale of ten for a perfect report. In the report of the fourth quarter of 1883 I find the names of the following persons who were marked ten: Agnes W. Belden, F. H. Kirkham, T. A. Kirkham, J. H. Kirkham and M. A. Kirkham. Those marked 9.8 were E. W. Atwood, Elmer Chapman, Grace L. Pimm, A. E. Ross, H. C. Francis and C. E. Wetherell. The school, from its beginning, has stood firmly for the cause of temperance. Dr. Brace, in his farewell sermon, says, "At my coming among my people, they generally drank ardent spirits, although they were not intemperate, according to the standard of that day. The first cost of liquor was greater, I judge, than the minister's salary." In 1816 Dr. Chapin was the first man to move for the exclusion of liquor, and the people soon followed his example.

Then Dr. Brace writes: "I have been a witness of a wonderful change, and I must testify to the remarkable temperance and sobriety of this people. This change took place some two or three years before the organization of the school.

In June, 1886, the Rev. J. O. Barrows drew up the following pledge: " We, the undersigned, relying upon the grace of God, as alone able to keep us from falling, and to establish us in every good word and work, do hereby give our testimony to the value and importance of temperance in all things; and more especially do we make known our belief, that in view of the evil and danger of using intoxicating liquors, entire abstinence from the use of such liquors, as a beverage, is a part of the truest temperance. Accordingly it is our purpose to abstain wholly from such use ourselves, and in all suitable ways to try to encourage others to practice the same abstinence." There are 224 names attached to this pledge. Nearly all in the school, except the very youngest classes, and also a few who were not members, signed this pledge. Other temperance work has been carried on here from time to time by earnest workers. Miss Mary Churchill has been a faithful one in the cause and has obtained many signatures to the pledge.

There have been only ten Superintendents, as follows: Dea. Daniel Willard, 18 years; Dea. Origen Wells, 4 years; Dea. Jedediah Deming, 4 years; Dea. Levi S. Deming, 11 years; Marcus W. Stoddard, 1 year; Dea. C. K. Atwood, 5 years; Joseph J. Francis, 5 years; Dea. Roger Welles, 4 years; Dea. John S. Kirkham, 7 years; Dea. Joshua Belden, since Jan. 2, 1880.

Such is the record of this school as I have been able to gather it up, but what has been the results or the influence of the work done here no one can tell or measure. Only God knows the earnest prayers offered up by the teachers in behalf of their scholars, or their self-sacrifice and devotion, so gladly and freely given for the good of the school. I have been a member for nearly three score and ten years and I know that the teachers I have had here have exerted a very great influence for good over my life. And now that our numbers seem to be rapidly decreasing I want to appeal to each and every member of this church to do all in his power to carry on the work. That each one would feel a responsibility resting upon him and not leave it to those who are the officers and teachers. When we see some one taking the wrong road we wish we had the power to reach out our hand and lift that person into the right path. Jesus told His disciples that if He was lifted up He would draw all men unto Him. That wonderful lifting power that we desired, He has, but He asks His followers to lift Him up so that others can see what He has done for them, what He is ready to do if they will only let Him. That is what we are trying to do here in this school by precept and example. Won't you come and help us, and not when the morning service is over turn your back upon us. We need you, Jesus needs you, and He has a rich blessing in store for all that deny themselves for His sake.

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